

# Looking Back, Looking Ahead

**State Bar publications and other content vehicles thrive due to the contributions of members – like you!**

BY JOE FORWARD

As we look toward 2026, I want to take a moment to reflect on the rich, wide-ranging work we published in *Wisconsin Lawyer* in 2025 – and to look ahead with purpose and optimism at the year to come.

A lot happened in 2025, and *Wisconsin Lawyer* authors kept the membership abreast of the changes throughout the year. Thank you to all who contributed!

Through feature articles in various practice areas, an ongoing series on artificial intelligence in the law, standing and rotating columns on ethics, practice management, technology, lawyer well-being, legal education, and more – we hope it helped members stay up to date.

As editor, I drive the publication's direction with the help of a five-person team (noted in the masthead) and the 15-member Editorial Board, members who graciously volunteer their time and talents to ensure a quality product every month.

But the magazine is only as good as its contributions. I encourage more members to think about writing, or mentor someone who wants to write (coauthoring encouraged). Writing for *Wisconsin Lawyer* (and *InsideTrack Weekly*) is eligible for continuing legal education credit – and opens doors.

In 2026, my goal remains the same: work to make *Wisconsin Lawyer* a primary source of information, keep members engaged, and strategize to ensure its pages reflect the rich diversity of the membership. This is not an easy goal, but it is well worth pursuing.

In 2026, I ask one thing of you, the member: Help me achieve this goal. Do you want more perspectives or voices? Write or encourage someone to write. Lawyers and judges, those in the trenches, have knowledge and advice to impart. *Wisconsin Lawyer* is your forum.

## *Wisconsin Lawyer*: Practice Area Themes

From our January 2025 issue onward, we aimed to chart both the enduring contours of legal practice and the changing topography of our profession through monthly feature articles,

standing and rotating columns, and practice area themes throughout the year.

Practice area themes included 1) litigation and appellate law, 2) transactional law, and 3) regulatory and administrative law. These are large buckets, to be sure. The idea is that subspecific practice areas fit within these larger categories.

For example, employment lawyers deal with transactional law issues daily, but when issues later arise, employment litigation may be necessary. Business lawyers draft many contracts. But even the airtight contract may end up in circuit court.

Almost every area of law has “transactional” and “litigation or appellate” components. And lawyers serve many industries or legal areas regulated by state and federal law.

We'll continue these same practice area themes in 2026. Check out the **2026 Editorial Calendar** in this issue. If you are a litigator or appellate lawyer, consider writing for the February issue. Regulatory lawyer? Write for March. April is our transactional law issue.

Subsequent months will rotate these themes.

One thing to remember is that a practice area theme drives some, but not all, content for that issue. As an Editorial Board member once said when discussing the practice theme idea, “we don't want to throw out the baby with the bath water.”

The themes help us drive article submission placement and author recruiting. But if we have a timely litigation article, we'll still run it in a “transactional law-themed” issue.

Does that make sense? The transactional law-themed issue will include *some* articles on transactional law, but the entire issue is not dedicated to transactions. So, please send your submissions any time of year, regardless of the theme.

## Closing Thought

Thanks again to all who contributed to *Wisconsin Lawyer* and other State Bar publications in 2025. We hope to see you again, as well as new authors, in 2026. Happy New Year! **WL**



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